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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/761,956	01/21/2004	Jitsumi Hanafusa	S011-5194	3875

7590 09/30/2005

ADAMS & WILKS
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EXAMINER

PETRAVICK, MEREDITH C

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3671

DATE MAILED: 09/30/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/761,956

Applicant(s)

HANAFUSA ET AL.

Examiner

Meredith C. Petravick

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 5 and 6 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 21 January 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>7/12/2004</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over EP 1,138,831 to Hanafusa et al. in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,823,947 to Nagaoka et al.

Hanafusa et al. discloses a working machine including:

- a working unit (snow blower 13)
- a traveling unit (12)
- a working device (engine 14)
- an electric motor (21L or 21R)

Hanafusa et al. also discloses an output shaft (105) that extends substantially horizontally from a transmission (100) to the working unit. However, the transmission in Hanafusa et al. uses a belt (103) to transfer power from the horizontally orientated working device to the output shaft instead of a vertically oriented input shaft as claimed.

Like Hanafusa et al., Nagaoka et al. discloses a working machine having a working unit and a traveling unit. The working unit is connected to an output shaft (71) of transmission driven by the working device (engine 20). Unlike Hanafusa et al., Nagaoka et al. discloses orienting the working device vertically so that the input shaft (51) to the transmission is also oriented vertically and connects directly. The engine is directly on top of the transmission case (58).

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Nagaoka et al. teaches that this allows the device to be smaller (Col. 6, lines 55-56, Col. 9, lines 8-16, Col. 7, lines 38-39).

Given the teaching in Nagaoka et al., it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to replace the working device and belt of Hanafusa et al. with a vertically oriented working device and input shaft as in Nagaoka et al., in order to facilitate ease of use since the device will be smaller.

Regarding claims 2-4, the working unit is a snow-removing unit and the traveling has two crawler belts in Hanafusa et al. Nagaoka et al. show the driving mechanism for the wheels are inside the transmission casing (Fig. 2).

Conclusion

3. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Meredith C. Petravick whose telephone number is 571-272-6995. The examiner can normally be reached on M-T 8:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thomas B. Will can be reached on 571-272-6998. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Meredith C Petravick
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3671

September 28, 2005